

Luke 21:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

Analysis

And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. Jesus was positioned where He could observe the temple treasury, the Court of Women, where thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles collected offerings. The verb *anablepsas* (ἀναβλέψας, 'looked up') suggests deliberate attention—Jesus observed not casually but purposefully. The phrase *tous plousious* (τοὺς πλουσίους, 'the rich men') introduces the contrast at this passage's heart.

The treasury scene sets up Jesus' radical critique of religious giving. The *gazophylakion* (γαζοφυλάκιον, 'treasury') was a public space where worshipers displayed their piety through visible donations. Large gifts from wealthy donors would attract attention and admiration—the religious equivalent of modern major donor recognition. Jesus' observation initiates a teaching moment that will overturn conventional assumptions about divine valuation of human offerings.

Historical Context

The temple treasury was located in the Court of Women, the easternmost court where both men and women could enter. Thirteen trumpet-shaped collection boxes received specific types of offerings—temple tax, wood offerings, incense, etc. This was one of the most public areas of the temple complex, making donations visible to many observers. Wealthy donors often made ostentatious gifts, and religious leaders would publicly acknowledge large contributions. This was Jesus' final week before crucifixion, and He was teaching daily in the temple (Luke 21:37-38). His

observations here occurred during intense confrontation with religious authorities who would soon plot His death.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Why did Jesus deliberately observe the treasury, and what does this suggest about God's attention to our giving?
2. How does the public nature of temple giving in Jesus' day parallel modern church culture around donations and recognition?
3. What might Jesus observe if He watched how you give—not just the amount, but your heart attitude?

Interlinear Text

Ἀναβλέψας	δὲ	εἶδεν	τοὺς	βάλλοντας	τὰ	δῶρα	αὐτῶν
he looked up	And	and saw	G3588	casting	G3588	gifts	G846
G308	G1161	G1492		G906		G1435	
εἰς	τὸ	γαζοφυλάκιον	πλουσίους				
into	G3588	the treasury	the rich men				
G1519		G1049	G4145				

Additional Cross-References

John 8:20 (Parallel theme): These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

Matthew 27:6 (Parallel theme): And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

2 Chronicles 36:18 (Parallel theme): And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.

2 Kings 24:13 (Parallel theme): And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.

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